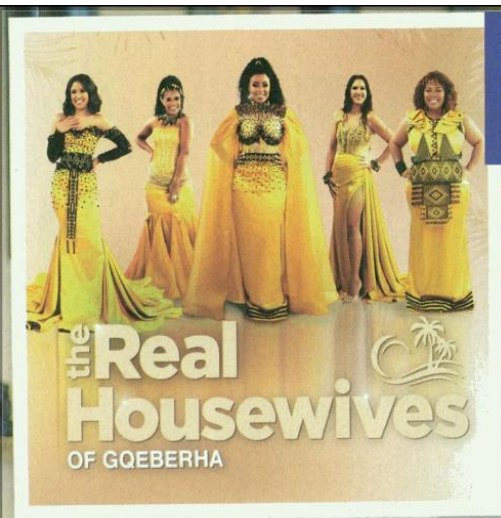


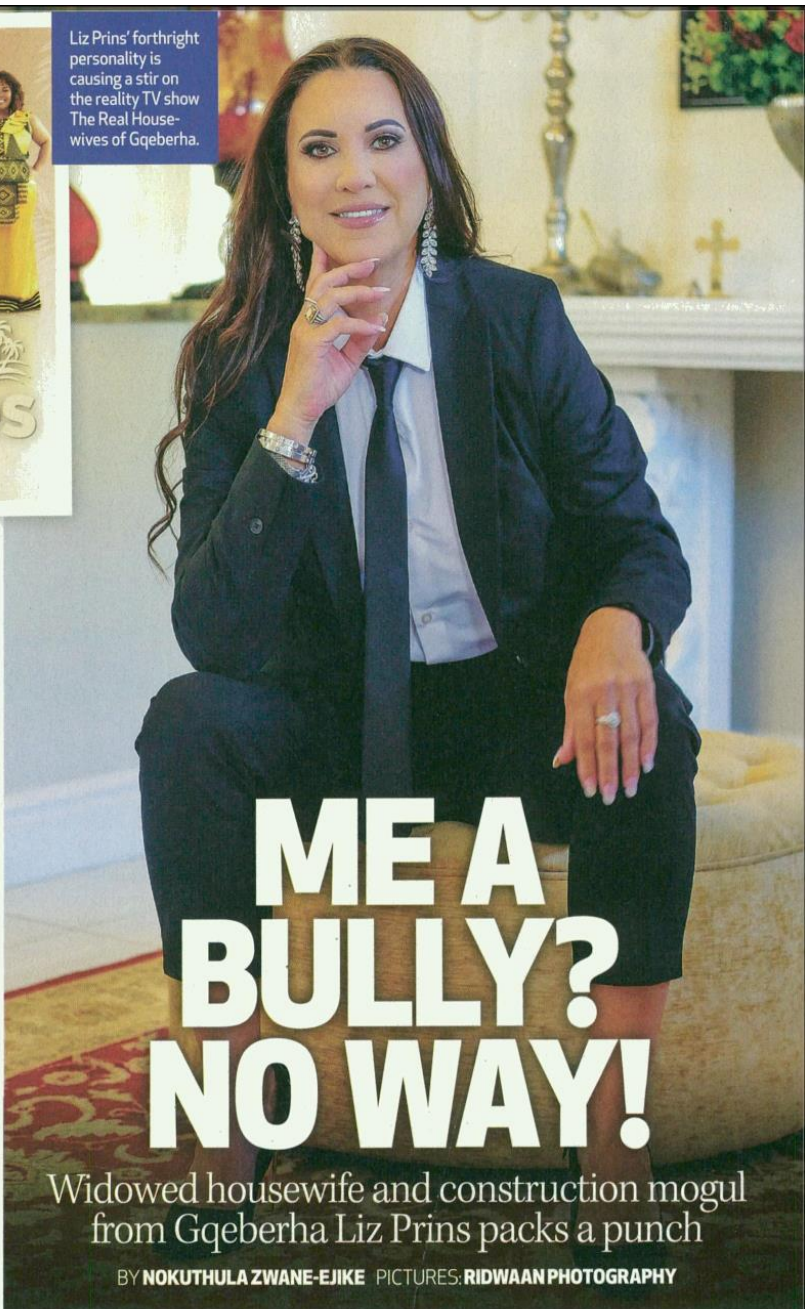


Publication: You - Inside
Title: ME A BULLY? NO WAY!
Publish date: 09 Mar 2023
Page: 20

Reach: 58734
AVE: R 77478.81
Author: Nokuthula Zwane-Ejike



Liz Prins' forthright personality is causing a stir on the reality TV show The Real Housewives of Gqeberha.



ME A BULLY? NO WAY!

Widowed housewife and construction mogul from Gqeberha Liz Prins packs a punch

BY NOKUTHULA ZWANE-EJIKE PICTURES: RIDWAAN PHOTOGRAPHY

SHE'S been called a bully and a hurricane, doesn't mince her words when it comes to her fellow housewives' looks and has as much contempt for bakkie drivers as she has for a badly coordinated outfit. Any way you look at it, Liz Prins is a force of nature and she's had her fair share of critics. But does she care? Not in the slightest.

"Honestly, it doesn't bother me," she tells YOU. "I know the person I am."

Liz is one of five cast members on The Real Housewives of Gqeberha (RHOG) and has been making waves and raising eyebrows from the start.

In the first episode she tells Ashleigh Mather, the youngest housewife, "I usually sit at the head of the table," when they go to a dinner party hosted by fellow housewife and former Idols SA contestant Buli G Ngomane.

She proceeds to critique Ashleigh's outfit, and viewers laid into her for being mean to the bubbly, young homemaker.

Liz then shows her nicer side when she invites Ashleigh to her salon to get her hair done – but don't be fooled into thinking Liz has gone soft.

There's plenty more drama on the horizon and the friction between the two women is palpable at times.

"I literally have nothing to say about her," Liz says. "People who know me don't look at me as a bully. Everybody who knows me, knows who I am."

The RHOG cast includes Norma Nicol, a pal of Liz's, and salon owner Unathi Faku. Liz met Norma at events before the series started and they became close during the show. "She's a great confidante," she tells us.

The RHOG is the first series of the

franchise to be set in the Windy City and Liz was initially thrilled when she was invited to join.

"I said 'yes' with excitement and then I went to bed. When I woke up the next day, I called them to say I'd changed my mind.

"I was excited at first because it's such an honour to be asked to be a part of that franchise, but my kids said, 'No, Mother, absolutely not. You cannot be on this show, you have no filter. You just say whatever you want'. That was

why I thought I didn't want to do it."

But after mulling it over she decided to go for it. "When things are presented with positive intentions, there's no need to doubt it. You must just go for it or you'll end up with regrets."

SHE introduces herself to viewers in a very Liz-like way. "No matter what life throws at me, I will always be fabulous," she says.

But the mom of three and



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grandmother of two has had her share of tough times.

Liz and her husband, Randall, were visiting their eldest daughter, Lizel Prins, in New York in 2013 with their younger kids, Kirsty Du Toit and Tamsin Prins, when tragedy struck.

Randall, a 44-year-old civil engineer, suffered a heart attack and died in his daughter's home.

Liz was devastated. "It was as if somebody had switched off the lights. It was very traumatic. I had to stay in the country for two weeks while an autopsy was done before I was allowed to come home.

"I loved him," she adds.

Randall was cremated in the US and Liz, Kirsty and Tamsin returned to SA with his ashes. Then she rolled up her sleeves and got right back to work at the construction company she'd run with her husband.

The company tackles large-scale industrial projects and clients include the likes of Transnet and the department of public works.

At first Liz, a quantity surveyor and administrator at the firm, intended only to complete projects they'd already started. "But as those progressed, I felt confident enough to carry on and take the business to another level. That also helped with my grieving process."

She wanted to honour Randall's legacy by carrying on. "I'd go to site meetings and be strong, sit in boardroom meetings with contractors and be strong and at the end of the day I'd fall asleep, crying. But I had to carry on."

Her steely resolve is what made her the woman she is today, she says.

"It's because of what I've been through. It's crazy. I can't believe I did it."

LIZEL (30) now lives in Dallas, Texas, with her young kids, Jacob and Adi, and the dotting granny visits them as often as she can.

Kirsty (28) and Tamsin (25) live in SA and she sees them regularly – but as family-oriented as she is, Liz admits there have been tense



Liz owns one of Gqeberha's most prominent construction companies and juggles work with being a mom to three daughters.

'NO MATTER WHAT LIFE THROWS AT ME, I WILL ALWAYS BE FABULOUS'

times between her and her firstborn.

Lizel's marriage broke down and Liz describes her daughter's divorce as "a roller coaster ride".

Then Lizel came out as gay.

"Lizel called me and said, 'Mom, I've met someone'. I was so excited, I asked, 'Who, who?' and she didn't want to tell me.

"Then she said it was a girl. I was so mad at her – not because I don't like gay people, I love them; my best friends are gay. But I couldn't accept the relationship for a long time, for more than a year.

"I'd raised my girls in a traditional home and, as a mom, you think of the white picket fence thing for your daughters."

She's only recently started to call Lizel's partner, Jess, her "partner". "I used to refer to her as 'her friend,'" she says.

In the third episode of RHOG, which was filmed in October, Liz went to Chicago to run the Chicago Marathon and met Jess for the first time in person.

"I just thought to myself, 'This is your daughter; you should love her no matter what'. I do love her. I'm so proud of her and her partner.

"Now I don't care what anyone says. I now have a wonderful relationship with my daughter. I wanted to say it on the show and I wanted her to see that her mom has accepted it."

Running and travelling are Liz's great passions and they helped her cope after Randall's death.

"They're my medication. If there is a marathon in Amsterdam or Chicago, I'll be there. That's my outlet."

She also enjoys travelling solo and spent 41 days on her own travelling in Türkiye in 2020.

"It was amazing. I love seeing old buildings. I don't need a R50 000 hand-bag. No! Please send me on a holiday rather."

Liz has been dating since the loss of her husband and says she recently went out with a hospitality executive from Polokwane who popped the question. But she turned him down, because she doesn't like long-distance relationships.

"I don't think anyone wants me. They say I'm too bossy."

Oh, and in case you were wondering how old Liz is, you'll just have to keep guessing. "That's nobody's business," she says. □



Liz with her three daughters, Lizel Prins, Kirsty Du Toit and Tamsin Prins.

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